

Encyclopedia of Sleeping Habits of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Islam and Modern Science

Introduction:

The sleeping habits of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ are a perfect example of balance, discipline, and natural health. His sleep routine was simple yet highly effective in maintaining physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Islam emphasizes rest as a blessing from Allah, while modern science confirms that good sleep habits improve health, memory, and emotional balance. Following the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ in sleeping helps improve the quality of life and overall wellness.

Islamic View on Sleep:

Sleep is a sign of Allah's mercy and a natural need of the human body. The Qur'an says: 'And We made your sleep a means of rest.' (Surah An-Naba 78:9). Islam encourages balance — sleeping neither too much nor too little. The Prophet ﷺ used sleep as a form of renewal, ensuring his body and mind remained strong for worship and daily work.

The Prophet's Sleeping Routine:

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ maintained a consistent and disciplined sleep pattern. He would sleep early after the 'Isha prayer and wake up in the last part of the night for Tahajjud (voluntary prayer). He also took short naps (Qailulah) during the day. This pattern aligns with the body's natural circadian rhythm and is now supported by modern sleep science as the ideal sleep schedule.

Sleeping Early and Waking Early:

The Prophet ﷺ advised his followers to sleep early and wake up before dawn. He disliked engaging in unnecessary talk after the night prayer. He said: 'O Allah, bless my Ummah in the early hours of the morning.' (Tirmidhi 1212). Modern research shows that sleeping early and waking early improves focus, productivity, and mental health. It also aligns with the body's hormonal cycle, promoting better rest and energy during the day.

Sleeping Position of the Prophet ﷺ :

The Prophet ﷺ used to sleep on his right side, placing his right hand under his cheek. He said: 'When you go to bed, perform ablution as you do for prayer, then lie on your right side.' (Bukhari 247). Sleeping on the right side benefits the heart and digestive system, as confirmed by medical studies. It also prevents pressure on internal organs and improves blood circulation.

Sleeping on the Floor or Simple Bed:

The Prophet ﷺ preferred sleeping on a simple bed or mat rather than luxurious bedding. His mattress was made of palm fibers or leather filled with natural material. He said: 'Be in the world as if you were a stranger or a traveler.' (Bukhari 6416). Science shows that sleeping on firm surfaces improves posture, supports spinal alignment, and enhances deep sleep quality.

Performing Wudu (Ablution) Before Sleep:

The Prophet ﷺ encouraged performing ablution before sleeping. He said: 'When you go to bed, perform ablution as you do for prayer, then lie on your right side.' (Bukhari 247). Performing Wudu before sleep brings spiritual purification and mental relaxation. Modern science suggests that washing with cool water before sleeping lowers body temperature, signaling the brain to prepare for rest.

Reciting Qur'an and Dua Before Sleeping:

Before sleeping, the Prophet ﷺ used to recite Surah Al-Ikhlāṣ, Al-Falaq, and An-Naas, blow into his hands, and wipe over his body. (Bukhari 5017). He also recited Ayat al-Kursi (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:255) and said: 'Whoever recites Ayat al-Kursi before sleeping, Allah will protect him and no devil will come near him until morning.' (Bukhari 2311). Reciting Qur'an before sleeping reduces anxiety and promotes deep, peaceful sleep — similar to modern relaxation and meditation techniques.

Daytime Nap (Qailulah):

The Prophet ﷺ recommended taking a short nap (Qailulah) in the midday period. He said: 'Take a nap, for the Shayatin (devils) do not take naps.' (Tabarani). Scientific studies confirm that short naps improve alertness, memory, and heart health. A 20-minute nap helps restore energy without disturbing night sleep patterns.

Avoiding Sleeping on the Stomach:

The Prophet ﷺ forbade sleeping on the stomach. He said: 'This is a posture that Allah dislikes.' (Abu Dawood 5040). Modern medical research supports this teaching — sleeping on the stomach puts strain on the spine, neck, and lungs, and can cause back pain and poor breathing. Sleeping on the right side or back is healthier and promotes better blood circulation.

Cleanliness and Environment Before Sleeping:

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized cleanliness and calmness before sleeping. He encouraged shaking the bed or blanket before lying down (Bukhari 6320) to remove dust or insects. He also slept in a dark, quiet, and clean environment, which aligns with modern sleep hygiene practices for deeper, uninterrupted rest.

Scientific Perspective on Prophetic Sleep Habits:

Modern science now validates many of the Prophet's ﷺ sleep habits. Sleeping early regulates melatonin — the sleep hormone. Sleeping on the right side aids digestion

and heart function. Performing ablution lowers body temperature, preparing the body for rest. Short naps enhance cognitive performance. All these practices together form a scientifically balanced sleep routine that promotes both physical and mental health.

Spiritual and Mental Peace Through Sleep:

The Prophet ﷺ treated sleep as an act of worship and renewal. He viewed it as a means to thank Allah for His blessings and prepare for another day of devotion. He said: 'Your body has a right over you.' (Bukhari 1874). This shows the balance between worship and self-care — a principle supported by psychology for emotional stability and inner peace.

Summary:

The sleeping habits of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ combine physical health, spiritual tranquility, and scientific wisdom. Sleeping early, on the right side, with ablution, and reciting Qur'an brings peace and energy. Modern science confirms these habits improve digestion, mental health, and sleep quality. Following the Prophet's example in sleeping leads to a balanced life filled with peace, productivity, and spiritual harmony.